

## A Subject of Gossip.

By Pierce Blundell.

"The Sorceress,"  
A Story of the  
Great Sardou's  
TRAGIC PLAY.  
Begins in The  
Evening World,  
THURSDAY,  
OCT. 13

"Gossip—it's a confounded nuisance, that's what I call it! Why can't they let us alone? I am accustomed to any amount of gossip; people must have something to talk about, and I'm sure I'm delighted to be able to afford them any amusement; but when it comes to being smacked on the back and congratulated six times in one afternoon, it's coming a bit too strong. I don't mind for my own sake—a man can look after himself—but I'm thinking of you. I was in hopes that you had not heard."

"Not heard, indeed! I had two letters this morning and three this afternoon; four wanting to know when the wedding was to be, and the fifth from a girl asking to be bridesmaid. I am afraid to go out. People fly at me at every corner, shake my hands off, and say how delighted they are, and how charming it is, and how they always knew it would come to this; and that we are made for one another—they never did know two people so exactly suited."

"Extraordinary! That's what they say to me. I never was so taken back in my life. Of course, we've always been good friends, but—"

"Certainly not."

"Neither do I. It's absurd! Utter nonsense!"

"No, but really—let us have it out while we are about it. What can have given rise to such a ridiculous report? We've been a good deal together, of course, because we are in the same set, and always seem to hit it off, and you are such a jolly good dancer, and all that kind of thing; but I can't see what we have done to set people talking at this rate. Honestly, now—I am anxious to know—did you ever imagine—that is to say, did you think—I mean, have I ever?"

"You never have! No, Capt. May, and I have never imagined! On the contrary, I don't mind admitting, now that we are upon the subject, that I have cherished a secret grudge against you because you have never given me an opportunity of refusing you. That sort of neglect rankles in a woman's mind, and now you see for yourself the awkward position in which it has placed me. When people ask if I am engaged to you I am obliged to confess that I have never been asked. You ought to have thought of this, and provided against it. It would have been so easy some day to get a ball, or in an interval at the theatre—the whole thing might have been over in five minutes, and then I should have been able to say that I had refused you and everything would have been happy and comfortable. I don't feel as if I could ever forgive you!"

"Sorry, indeed! You see, I should have been most happy, only I could never feel quite sure that you really would refuse."

"How odious you are! You need not have been afraid; there never was anything more certain since the beginning of the world. I wouldn't marry you to save my life! I would as soon think of falling in love with the man in the moon!"

"Same with me! I think no end of you, but when Lewis came up and congratulated me the other day I was struck all of a heap. If he had said the same thing about a dozen other girls I should have been less surprised, but it never occurred to me to look upon you in that light."

"Oh, indeed! I'm awfully obliged, I'm sure, but I don't think much of your taste. There are a dozen other men who wouldn't agree with you, that's one comfort. As I am so utterly repulsive in your eyes, I think I had better say 'good afternoon' at once, and relieve you of my presence."

"What nonsense you talk! I never said a word about your appearance that I know of. That's the worst of arguing with a woman—she flies off at a tangent, and there's no doing any good with her. I don't see why you should be offended. You seemed to think it just as impossible to fall in love with me."

"I don't care a little bit what you observed. I am not going to talk to you any longer. I am going across the room to mamma. Good afternoon, Capt. May. You needn't dance with me at Lady Bolton's this evening, as my hair annoys you so much!"

"I shall ask Miss Cunliffe instead. She is a capital walker. Your mother is waiting for you at the door. Fourth and sixth, wasn't it, and the first extra? I must ask her at once, as she is so much engaged. Good afternoon, Miss Blanchard, if you will go, and as the good little boys say, 'Thank you so much for a pleasant afternoon!'"

"On the Way Home—  
Her Soliloquy.

"He never thought of such a thing. It never occurred to him to think of me in that light, hateful creature! And why not, I should like to know? Doesn't he think I'm nice? I never cared for him, but he has no business not to like me. What horrid taste! And to talk of a dozen other girls! That means Lucia Charvillat, I suppose, and Adeline Rowe. I have noticed that he dances with them. Better than me, I'm the prettiest, and I can be awfully nice if I like. I have never been really nice to him, not my very nicest, or he wouldn't have talked as he did to-day. I might try the effect this evening. I

meant to be offended, but perhaps the other would have more effect. I believe I'll try it. No one can ever say that I am a flirt, but there are occasions when it is a girl's duty to teach a man a lesson, and he had no business to say that about my hair."

I wonder if he was right? He has awfully good taste, as a rule. I believe, after all, it would be rather becoming. \* \* \* I'll get Elise to try to-night, and wear my new white dress, and the pearls, and I'll say to him the very first thing that I'm sorry, and ask him to dance with me all the same. Then, when he sees how nice I am, he will be vexed with himself for being so nasty. It will do him no end of good. I'd give worlds if he would only propose to me before the season is over! I'd refuse him, of course, but that wouldn't matter."

"His Soliloquy.

"She looked disgracefully pretty! Nothing like putting a girl in a good, stand-up race to see what she's made of. I never knew she had so much in her before. And she would just as soon think of falling in love with the man in the moon, would she? That's pretty tall! Hang it all! why do they put things in a fellow's head? It was hapless enough before, and now this has unsettled me altogether. \* \* \* A man may not want to marry a girl, but that is no reason why she should be so precious. I always fancied that she had a decided weakness. \* \* \* So she wants to laugh at me, does she? Little wretch! She is always up to some mischief. I wouldn't object if it was at some other fellow, for those dupes are uncommonly fetching."

Extract from the Times four months later:

On the 26th inst., at St. George's, Manover Square, by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Oxford, assisted by the Rev. Noel Blanchard, the brother of the bride, Cyril Aubrey May, Captain Royal Horse Guards, second son of James Eaton May, Esq., of Brompton Manor, Hants, to Phyllis Mary Olivia, only daughter of Major Blanchard of Berckumbe, Co. Wiltshire, and Florio, Alpes-Maritimes—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

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BY ROY L. M'CARDELL.

"DON'T make so much noise, Mr. Nag! Actually, the way you walk gets upon my nerves!"

"Why don't you cultivate repose? You are always in a hurry. You rush around the house; you hurry down-town; but that's to get away from me, I suppose? You walk at top speed to the house, you run upstairs, and by that time I am so nervous I don't know what to do."

"Cultivate repose, Mr. Dubb cultivates repose. He has to restrain himself, his wife was telling me. He has to restrain himself or otherwise he would be killing himself with over-work."

"Mr. Dubb says every time he sees people working he wants to rush in and help them. When a new boarder comes to their house he can hardly keep from grabbing the flaming trunk and running upstairs with it, just for exercise; but he restrains himself—he cultivates repose."

"Brother Willie cultivates repose. He cultivates it till noon every day, you say?"

"Oh, Mr. Nag, I might have known your treacherous smile hid some cruel taunt! You are hardly in the house before you begin to rave at me and abuse me because I shield and shelter a young boy."

"He is but a boy—a child! He will be twenty-seven till early in January. He has outgrown his strength. His mind is taken up with his boyish sports. He has the mental strain of practicing throwing the hammer all day at his athletic club, and because the poor boy sleeps the innocent sleep of youth you mock at him and abuse him!"

"I would not permit him to stay in this house one minute, only it would please you too much to see him turned away from your door to die in the snow in the streets, if there was any snow in the streets, and, good-bye, knows, it may snow any day now!"

"Yes, smile like a fiend! In your mind's eye you see him trudging through the snow in his bare feet, for he does need a new pair of patent leathers. He can't wear his dress shoes, and, although I got him a new pair of tan Oxfords, made to order, still, he needs a new pair of patent leathers with those new fashionable cloth tops. Well, as I was saying, you would see him begging his bread from door to door, because Brother Willie is too proud to ask aid of any one. You would see him beg his bread and you would mock him!"

"You do mock him! Didn't you mock him the other night when he came home late from night school, dizzy with over-work? His face was flushed and he was talking incoherently. Yes, you

did, Mr. Nag! You mocked that poor, sick boy by saying 'What nasser?'"

"Oh, Mr. Nag, I believe you had been drinking! I believe Willie knew it, for, sick as he was, he hurried away from you, and, after putting his hat and shoes on the bed, he fell forward on his face, and it was the longest time before I could rouse him from the stupor he was in."

"And what did you do? You mocked him cruelly. You asked him where he got the bun. He had no bun, Mr. Nag. I looked all through his clothes. He didn't even have a cake in his pockets."

"Why do you smile at me? Am I to be mocked at, too? Oh, laugh if you will, but a day will come when you will regret it, but it will be too late then!"

"A woman gives up the best years of her life for a man. She stands his temper and his abuse. She leaves her home, she leaves her mother, she leaves everything for a man. She tries to make his home happy; she bears with his temper; she puts up with his abuse in silence, and then he mocks her! He mocks her people; he mocks her dear mother!"

"You know you do not love my mother, Mr. Nag! The least thing she says to you will make you fly into a rage. She talked with you for three hours last night, telling you how you act and showing you how you ought to

behave, and when your cruel words that she should mind her own business made her scream so loud the neighbors sent for a policeman, you refused to apologize, except to say you were sorry she was such an old trouble-maker!"

"He is not an old trouble-maker. You said that because you know she prides herself on how young she looks. For what care you, so long as you can insult a little brother Willie, affront my mother and wound your wife in her tenderest emotions?"

"I do love my mother. We were more like companions than mother and daughter, and I would have her living with me now only she wants to run the house and order me around, a thing I would never stand even as a girl, and that was the reason I left home twice."

"All right; never mind, you say! But it isn't all right and I do mind! I won't stand your cruelty and neglect. I will go home to my mother, where I am always welcome! I would go this minute only we had words the last time she was here, and I know if I went to her she would cover over me about it."

"Your success? Is that all you come home for, Mr. Nag, your meals? Is your home only a hotel? Can't we have one moment's pleasant chat?"

"Oh, well, never mind! No, let me cry! And I will scream! You hate me! You wish I were dead. There he goes, rushing from the house! Oh, he doesn't care for his home, and I know it!"

## Good Luck Stories

The Penny That Was an Aladdin's Lamp to Widow Larkin's Boy.

In an humble garret on the east side of the great metropolis, Widow Larkin had six little forms to cover and six little mouths to feed.

True, the swallows built their nests under the eaves all about them and the sun smiled in as kindly through their windows as it did on the brown-stone fronts of their comfortable neighbors.

Her children were all bright, sweet-faced and gentle, with large, liquid eyes that any society woman would envy. But these blessings only served to rankle the soul of Widow Larkin and add to the tragedy of her existence.

Why shouldn't her children have a fair show with others? Day after day she cleaned office floors and sewed far into the night, but her small earnings would not pay expenses with the closest economy.

Bennie, her oldest, had been looking for work. He was small, for fourteen years, and of late he seemed to grow

more frail in the eyes of his anxious mother.

"Nobody wants a boy," he said, wearily, as he came into the garret one evening at twilight.

Widow Larkin gave him an appealing glance. She saw that there was a quiver in his chin as he went on bravely:

"They say I'm too little, and I can't read well—then a lump came into his little throat and he looked away."

"Never mind," answered his mother, cheerfully, "you can grow and you can learn."

Bennie sat quietly thinking for a while. Then he walked mechanically to the crooked mantel and took the pennies out of the cracked cup and went out for bread.

"Evening paper!" cried a shrill voice as he entered the bakery.

"Four," said Bennie, as he pointed to the rolls on the counter.

Why had he said four? He had five pennies. He was tired. He guessed he had forgot.

Half awake he went out under the thousands and millions of lights. Into the dreariness of New York by night the clouds loomed and loomed again about.

What was the difference to Bennie? Nobody wanted a boy.

"EVENING paper!" called a boy that hung close to a restaurant window.

Bennie and the newsboy stood, silent

for a moment watching the eager throng within that were eating and overeating, even gormandizing, unthinkingly of the thin little faces that were pressed against the window pane.

"There," said Bennie, in an undertone, "is the man that said I couldn't read."

He opened his little fist and bought an Evening World with his last penny.

THE little round clock on the crooked mantel pointed to 12. The children were all soundly sleeping. Bennie still sat by his mother tracing the lines in The Evening World. He had reached the Wants Column. He read:

WANTED—A boy. WANTED—A bright boy. WANTED—A boy that is willing to learn.

Why! Here are lots of people who want boys!

THE sun is smiling on the garret rooms of Widow Larkin. The swallows are building their spring nests. There is a bright rug on the floor and new shades at the windows.

Bennie is a great help to his mother. Through The World Wants he found somebody who wanted a boy. He was soon advanced, because he was willing to learn, and he is the most trusted and best-liked young man in the shop.

Widow Larkin sews at home now and the children are all growing rosy.

## "The Sorceress," Whose Love Led Her to Death by Fire.



Zoraya Accused by the Officers of the Inquisition.

THE love of Zoraya, an unconverted Moorish girl, for a Christian nobleman, is the theme of Sardou's tragic romance "The Sorceress," in which Mrs. Patrick Campbell is now playing her. This very love alone meant death for her if known to Torquemada's Inquisition, for the romance deals with the Spain of the beginning of the sixteenth century, when religious persecution raged fiercely.

In the scene pictured Zoraya is before the officers of the Inquisition charged with having latched on her wedding night the bride of the Spanish noble-

man with whom she is infatuated. It is a thrilling scene in the drama. And there are many of such thrilling and many moments also of beautiful sentiment.

This great masterpiece of Sardou has been made into a serial story by George Morehead, and its publication in installments will begin in "The Evening World" on Thursday of this week. All the stirring dramatic qualities of the play are preserved in the serial, and The Evening World readers will be thus enabled to enjoy this new and sensational Sardou creation for a few cents. Order the Evening World from your news-dealer and begin this wonderful story with the first chapter on Thursday.

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## HEARN

West Fourteenth Street

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